Present: Cllr Jeanne Alexander (Chair), Cllr Faruk Choudhury, Cllr Kashif Haroon, Cllr Jane Jones, Cllr Hardial Singh Rai and Cllr Tony Ramsay

Apologies: Cllr Lee Waker and Cllr Simon Bremner

14. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

15. Minutes - (22 July 2015)

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2015 were confirmed as correct.

16. Scrutiny Review on Confidence in and Engagement with the Local Police - Update report

Chief Inspector Martin Kirby was present and introduced a report to the Select Committee providing an update on the scrutiny review on ‘Confidence in and engagement with the local Police’.

The Select Committee were reminded that since the last meeting the Police had held several Ward Panel meetings across the Borough. Members were invited to attend their Ward Panel meetings and the Chair expressed her concerns that some Wards did not have Member representation at their meetings. Furthermore, there had been a meeting on the Safer Neighbourhood Board in the last week which Members had been invited to attend. Again, concerns were raised at the lack of Members that were present.

Chief Inspector Kirby advised that there had been some response to the surveys sent out to Members and the public regarding the scrutiny review.

The Chair advised that there had been reports on the news early that day that there 1000 PCSO’s would be removed from post within the Met Police. In response to a question from the Chair regarding the effect on the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Chief Inspector Kirby advised the Select Committee that the local area had two options:

1. Remove all neighbourhood posts in the Borough; or
2. Remove those posts that were not ward officers (there were currently 17).

At the current time no decision had been made, however the Select Committee wished for it to be recorded that they were opposed to losing the remaining ward PCSO’s. The Chair suggested the Select Committee write to the new GLA Member to advise of the Select Committees view.

The Chair then introduced Steve Thompson, Chair of the Stop and Search Group
who was in attendance.

Mr Thompson explained that the Borough had a dedicated Stop & Search Sub Group, set up in August 2010 which reported to the Safer Neighbourhood Board and was independently chaired. The Group received data on Stop and Search in the Borough and were able to give verbal and written feedback to the Police. The Group were also given the opportunity to quality assure stop and search slips completed by officers and to attend pre-planned operations, such as observing use of knife arches. This aimed to increase confidence in Police methods, allowing residents to feel confident that procedures were used fairly and appropriately.

The Select Committee noted that since 2012 the use of Stop and Search across London had reduced, with a major reduction in no-suspicion Stop and Search. These reductions were reflected in Barking and Dagenham, at the start of 2013 there were over 800 Stop and Searches per month, this had reduced to around 250 per month over the last year. The ethnic makeup of those Stop and Search was also in line with the Borough’s ethnicity statistics from the 2011 census, giving reassurance that specific groups were not being disproportionately targeted for Stop and Search. The arrest rate for Stop and Search was still low, around 20% at July 2015, however this had risen from an average of 16% in 2014 and a further 20% of those Stop and Searched received a Cannabis warning.

Mr Thompson also advised the Select Committee that a Section 60 order had not been used in the Borough since 2012. Members noted that Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 allows a police officer to stop and search a person without suspicion.

The Select Committee thanked Mr Thompson for his presentation and advised that they were reassured by the work of the Sub Group.

17. Scrutiny Review of Disabled Parking Provision in the Borough

The Divisional Director, Environment, presented a report to the Select Committee on the draft Scrutiny Review of Disabled Parking Provision within the Borough.

At their meeting on the 14 October 2014 Members of the Select committee considered a scrutiny report and work programme for reviewing parking for disabled people in and around the borough. The review had now concluded and a report produced which was appended to the agenda.

The report before the Select Committee detailed the consultation methods that had been used and the issues raised in the responses that had been received, alongside key census data.

The Select Committee were pleased to announce the recommendations that had arisen from the review:

1. The outcome of the review, with regard to public safety and the London Road Car Park, is fed into the SSCSC review on engagement with and confidence in local Police to address the perception of crime in the area and increase public confidence that CCTV systems are appropriately controlled.

2. Parking services are aiming for the “ParkMark” award for all car parks and as such there will need to be amendments to the bay markings and entry and exit routes.
3. A checklist is produced that can be provided to applicants before they submit their planning application and which can be issued when officers give pre-application advice for the provision of disabled parking bays in new developments.

4. Access officers are to be involved in pre-application discussions so access issues are identified and addressed from the outset for all accessible parking on and off street.

5. Blue Badge fraud is always high on the agenda; therefore we will commit to continue working with the police for enforcement.

6. Enforcement of all disabled bays in the borough which are within the local authorities control; other areas such as supermarket car parks etc. will be picked up through the planning stages.

7. To commit to reviewing and improving the on-line experience to enhance and not hinder the customer journey.

8. To explore the disabled facility grants/personalisation budgets to fund dropped kerbs where possible.

9. Some matters raised regarding permits are picked up in further reviews which are outside the remit of this paper.

The Select Committee were keen that the views of the Access Officer be made clear to Cabinet and that the Access Officers be included in future planning development discussions.

The report was noted.

18. Parking Enforcement Policy

The Divisional Director, Environment, introduced a report to the Select Committee on the Parking Enforcement Policy.

In July 2015, the SSCSC was presented with a scoping paper asking for them to accept a series of reports linking into the parking strategy.

- July 2015  Footway Parking
- September 2015  New parking opportunities
- November 2015  Consolidation of controlled parking zones

The report was the second of three reports which would support the review of the parking strategy and would focus on new parking opportunities.

The Council’s focus on parking provisions for people using the borough either working, visiting or living; should be focussing on what support the Council could give users to increase footfall within the borough and encourage growth.

The role of the Council and its partners was therefore to support the needs of businesses and residents to provide mechanisms which ensure that they were able to decide how and where they park.

The Council understood that there were restrictions in car free and private developments; however residents of these dwellings still came to the Council to ask for assistance on parking.

It was to be noted during this scrutiny review that although initially there was a perception of a lack of spaces in the Borough, there are further issues coming
forward to be considered:

- Residents of car free developments need a place to park their vehicle
- Residents of car free developments need to understand why the cost of a “Season Ticket” is so much higher than a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) permit
- The need to improve the customer journey for the purchase of permits by way of a different pricing structure and more efficient on-line services
- Better communication when implementing new schemes
- Supporting local businesses with an amount of allotted time without payment

The Select Committee were advised that extra staff had been introduced in parking enforcement. The additional income received meant the staff were effectively paying for themselves. Automated cameras had also been introduced across the Borough.

The Select Committee raised concerns regarding the lack of cash parking machines in the Borough and the effect this had on users, particularly the elderly who did not wish to use their mobile phone to pay for their parking ticket. These issues had also been raised at the Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) and it was suggested that a letter be written to the SNB explaining that there were still cash machines within some car parks in the Borough.

The Select Committee also considered a period of free parking in the Borough and were advised that from September this year there would be a period of 15 minutes free parking in the Borough.

The Select Committee were concerned with parking in the Borough in residential streets and felt the introduction of certain CPZ permit areas had pushed issues elsewhere. The Chair suggested that all Council Members contact the Divisional Director, Environment with details of the roads they would want to see included within CPZ.

The Select Committee noted the report.

19. **Half Year Performance Report**

The Divisional Director, Commissioning and Partnerships introduced a report to the Select Committee which provided a statistical update on performance.

The Council’s Adult and Community Services Directorate ensured key performance indicators under Community Safety and Public Protection, Enforcement, Culture and Sport and Community Cohesion and Equality were monitored internally through the Directorate Management Team, and through regular reports to the relevant Cabinet Members. In addition Community Safety and Community Cohesion indicators were reported quarterly to the Community Safety Partnership.

Every six months a summary of recent performance in all these areas was provided to the Safer & Stronger Community Select Committee for further scrutiny of progress against the areas that were within the Select Committee's remit.
The Select Committee had before them a detailed report and with regard to leisure, heritage and libraries noted that visits to the leisure centres and heritage sites had both increased (with the exception of educational visits), whilst library visits had decreased. However the decrease in library visits should be viewed as a consistent performance with the closure of the One Stop Shop facility at BLC at the end of March.

With regard to crime statistics, Chief Inspector Kirby advised that in the Police and Crime plan, the Mayor’s Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) set a target for the Metropolitan Police Service to reduce crime in 7 priority categories, known as the MOPAC 7, by 20% by 2016. The MOPAC 7 included burglary, violence with injury, robbery, theft from motor vehicle, theft of motor vehicle, criminal damage and theft from person.

The Select Committee were advised that in the rolling 12 month period ending 31st June 2015 there had been a decrease of 2,484 offences reported compared to the 2011/12 baseline (-24%). Therefore, the Met was on track to achieving the Mayor’s Office for Police And Crime (MOPAC) challenge to reduce these neighbourhood crimes by 20% by March 2016. However, there remained some challenges some of the individual MOPAC 7 priority crime types which included violence with injury, robbery, criminal damage and theft from person.

The Select Committee noted that in relation to anti-social behaviour, there had been a decrease of 15% at June 2015.

The Divisional Director, Environment, then updated the Select Committee on the Environment and Enforcement statistics with highlights including fixed penalty notices going up by 49% in the first quarter.

Standing Orders were suspended at this juncture, to allow the meeting to continue beyond 8.30pm.

20. Work Programme

The Chair requested that the Select Committee undertake a short scrutiny review on Beggars in Barking Town Centre at a future meeting.

The Chair asked Select Committee members to contact the Divisional Director Commissioning and Partnerships with any further ideas for scrutiny topics.

The Select Committee noted the work programme.
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